

VZCZCXYZ0007  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #2698/01 2361955  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 241955Z AUG 09  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0314  
INFO RHEHOND/DIR ONDCP WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//SCJ2/SCJ3/SCJ5//  
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHDC  
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF STATE AIR WING PATRICK AFB FL  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 7979  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 2680  
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 8638  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 9085  
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA 4105

UNCLAS BOGOTA 002698

SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR INL/LP AND INL/RM  
DEPT FOR WHA/AND

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [SNAR](#) [SENV](#) [KCRM](#) [PTER](#) [CO](#)  
SUBJECT: NAS MONTHLY REPORT FOR JULY 2009

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SUMMARY  
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1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The following developments occurred in July, 2009: The aerial eradication team sprayed 10,576 hectares (ha) and, with 57,219 ha sprayed so far this year, is on track to reach the 100,000 ha calendar goal. Total manual coca eradication through July was 28,739 ha. The GOC is taking various measures to increase manual eradication production in an attempt to reach the 70,000 ha goal for the year. Landmine and hostile fire incidents killed four security personnel and three civilian eradicators; so far, 28 personnel have died in 2009 during manual eradication operations. Plan Colombia Helicopter Program (PCHP) flew 13 hours supporting six medical evacuation flights transporting a total of eight patients. PCHP supported three Chief of Mission High Value Target (HVT) Joint Task Force operations. In one mission, Colombian forces severely impacted Mono Jojoy's security ring and captured Swedish-made, Venezuelan antitank weapons. Hostile fire killed one PCHP gunner and injured another. ARAVI's NAS-supported fleet flew 2,047 mission hours during the month. The Counter Drug (CD) Brigade secured a total of 9,388 ha for aerial eradication missions. One CD Brigade officer was killed in action. In July, the interagency complaints committee received 1,020 new claims of alleged spray damage to legal crops; the majority of the claims originated from the same area in Narino. END SUMMARY.

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AERIAL ERADICATION PROGRAM  
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2. (SBU) Aircraft based in Forward Operating Locations (FOLs) in Tumaco, San Jose del Guaviare, and Carimagua/Cumaribo sprayed a total of 10,576 hectares (ha) in July. A total of 7,340 ha were sprayed out of Tumaco; 1,706 ha out of San Jose del Guaviare; and 1,530 ha out of Carimagua/Cumaribo. The aerial eradication team has sprayed 57,219 ha so far this year, and is on track to reach the 100,000 ha calendar year goal. Eradication aircraft experienced one hostile fire incident during the month, resulting in one impact. So far this year, the aircraft have been involved in 13 hostile fire incidents with 21 impacts; no one has been wounded or killed as a result of these incidents.

3. (SBU) Macarena Consolidation Program officials (PCIM) and the Antinarcotics Police (DIRAN) have discussed with NAS the possibility of opening up the far southern portion of the PCIM to spray. The PCIM was declared a no-spray zone in mid-2008 to accommodate Colombian consolidation plans in the area, including voluntary

eradication. [NOTE: In August, GOC and NAS Aviation Unit (NAU) received written permission to spray in the far southern area of the PCIM which has an estimated 800-1,200 ha of coca. END NOTE.]

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MANUAL ERADICATION PROGRAM  
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14. (SBU) Manual eradication operations were ongoing in 11 departments. Phase III of the GOC's 2009 manual eradication campaign (GME program) will begin in early August. Total eradication of coca for July was 4,916 ha, bringing the GME program's year-to-date total to 24,531 ha. Including eradication carried out by the Colombian security forces, total coca eradication through July was 28,739 ha, short of the pace to reach the 70,000 ha manual eradication goal for 2009. The GOC's eradication goal for Phase III is 22,000 hectares, more than double the hectares eradicated during Phase II. To increase the pace of eradication during Phase III, the GOC plans to have upwards of 200 GMEs in the field pulling up coca (compared to just over 100 GMEs during Phases I and II). The DIRAN has also created two temporary police companies and enlisted the support of several other police units to provide security for manual eradicators for Phase III.

15. (SBU) In July, landmine and hostile fire incidents killed four Colombian security personnel and three civilian eradicators. In one incident, three soldiers and three civilian eradicators were killed by hostile fire when their boat was fired upon in the Department of Choco in Northwestern Colombia. Through July, 28 people (20 security personnel, seven civilians, and a UN topographer) have died during this year's manual eradication operations (four security personnel were killed in a helicopter accident). In all of 2008, 26 security personnel and civilian eradicators were killed.

16. (SBU) Separate from the GME program, the Colombian Army (COLAR) and the Colombian National Police (CNP) conduct manual eradication as part of their normal operations. Through July, COLAR had eradicated 3,081 ha of coca, 44 ha of poppy and two ha of marijuana, and the CNP had eradicated 963 ha of coca, six ha of poppy and 46 ha of marijuana.

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PLAN COLOMBIA HELICOPTER PROGRAM (PCHP)  
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17. (SBU) PCHP aircraft operated from Tumaco, Cumaribo, San Jose and Tolemaida bases and flew a total of 786 hours providing air assaults, air movements, reconnaissance, medical evacuations, and support missions for the CD Brigade and other vetted COLAR units. PCHP helicopters conducted an air assault mission with BACNA 2 and DEA on drug laboratories northeast of the Tumaco, Narino, and interdicting three laboratories and seizing large quantities of gasoline and coca leave; three persons were captured. PCHP flew 13 hours supporting six medical evacuation flights that transported eight patients. Three COLAR Gunners were qualified as standardization instructors.

18. (SBU) PCHP supported three Chief of Mission High Value Target (HVT) Joint Task Force operations. On July 13, from Cumaribo, Vichada, PCHP supported Joint Special Operation "Jubilo" with 3 x UH-60s and 2 x UH-II gunships. A combined airlift task force inserted over 300 troops on an arms cache target east of Barranco Minas. During another mission, PCHP deployed 2 x UH-60 and 3 x UH-II gunships from Tumaco to Bahia Malaga, on the Pacific coast, and inserted 30 Colombian Army Special Forces near a narcotrafficking site northeast of Buenaventura. While the principal target was not found, the complex mission showed Colombian force projection into a very difficult area. During a third HVT operation on July 23, the principal target, FARC 43 Front Commander Negro Alberto, and 18 members of his staff (two of them members of his senior staff) were killed in action, dealing a major blow to Mono Jojoy's security forces. The Colombian Special Forces seized personal effects for 70 people, electronic and hard copy documents, as well as nine Swedish anti-tank rocket launchers that had been originally sold to Venezuela by Sweden in a registered arms deal. [NOTE: The capture of these anti-tank rockets became a source of an international polemic when Sweden confirmed that it had sold these weapons to Venezuela in an arms deal. END NOTE.]

¶9. (SBU) COLAR (Colombian Army) aircrew flying PCHP aircraft sustained two casualties in July. During the extraction phase of the counternarcotics mission supporting a BACNA 3 operation near Larandia, one UH-II gunship received three enemy hits and the gunner was wounded in the lower leg. A combined task force attacked a target believed to be a part of the FARC Secretariat's security forces in the Meta department. During the air assault phase of the operation, the lift aircraft came under enemy fire and a PCHP UH-II helicopter gunship's COLAR Gunner was killed.

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COLOMBIA NATIONAL POLICE (CNP) AIR SERVICE (ARAVI) SUPPORT  
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¶10. (SBU) ARAVI's NAS-supported fleet flew 2,047 mission hours in July. The seven UH-60 Black Hawks closed out the month with 180 flight hours and an Operational Readiness (OR) rate of 64 percent. Two UH-60s are undergoing depot maintenance after hostile impacts during interdiction operations. The Bell 212 fleet flew 236 mission hours with an OR rate of 60 percent. One Bell 212 still needs to be inducted into the Service Life Extension Program/Rewire. The Huey II OR rate was 67 percent while flying 1,032 hours. Four Huey II aircraft, or twelve percent of the fleet, are currently undergoing depot maintenance for structural repairs.

¶11. (SBU) The DC-3 fleet flew 318 hours in July, with an OR rate of 47 percent; two DC-3s are undergoing a 2,000-hour inspection. The last C-26 Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Aerial Platform (ISRAP) PNC 0224 is expected to be delivered in late August or early September.

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INTERDICTION  
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¶12. (SBU) During July, the CNP seized 7.9 metric tons of cocaine hydrochloride (HCl) and cocaine base, 20.3 metric tons of coca leaf, 4.6 metric tons of marijuana, and 12 kilograms (kgs) of heroin. The CNP also destroyed 13 cocaine HCl laboratories, 180 coca base laboratories, and captured 443 metric tons of precursor chemicals.

¶13. (SBU) The Bogota Junglas (CNP Airmobile Commandos) hit an HCl laboratory near Cucuta, near the Venezuelan border on July 15. On July 17, DIRAN Cucuta also seized two kgs of heroin at a road checkpoint in Cucuta. The DIRAN Cucuta Commander has observed that narcotraffickers are erecting HCl laboratories straddling the Venezuela border. In a few cases, the HCl laboratory complex is actually split, the HCl laboratory is built on the Colombian side, while the barracks, kitchen, and precursor storage is placed on the Venezuelan side. The DIRAN Cucuta Commander has developed a working relationship with his counterpart Venezuelan antinarcotics units.

¶14. (SBU) On July 2 near Retorno, Guaviare, the Bogota Junglas destroyed 12 coca base laboratories containing 171 kgs of coca base, 3.4 metric tons of coca leaf, and 10,567 gallons of precursor chemicals. On July 6, the DIRAN Heroin Group seized 262.9 kgs of cocaine at a vehicle checkpoint near Lorica, Cordoba. On July 7, the DIRAN Chemical Control Group seized 2.8 metric tons of precursor chemicals at a road checkpoint near Medellin. On July 7 near Puerto Gaitan, Meta, the Bogota Junglas destroyed a coca base laboratory containing 12 kgs of coca base. On July 8, the DIRAN Heroin Group seized 98.12 kgs of cocaine and a vehicle, and captured two men at a road checkpoint near Villarica, Cauca. On July 9, the DIRAN Money Laundering Group captured Gustavo Pabon, a member of the Fabio Ochoa narcotrafficking group wanted for extradition to the United States. On July 10-13, The Bogota Junglas destroyed two HCl laboratories north of San Jose del Guaviare and one HCl laboratory in Magdalena Medio. On July 14, the DIRAN Chemical Group captured 7.73 metric tons of precursor chemicals at a road checkpoint near Cali. On July 15, the DIRAN Chemical Group seized 6.6 metric tons of precursor chemicals and two trucks, and captured three men at a road checkpoint near Aguachica, Cesar.

¶15. (SBU) On July 17-18, the Tulua Junglas conducted operations to hit a series of six cocaine HCl laboratories located near the high-threat FARC 6 Front area near Corinto, Cauca. The Colombian Air Force provided air cover (2 x ARPIAs, 1 x AC47) to escort the

Jungla airmobile element. The Tulua Junglas destroyed a major precursor chemical storage cache during this operation, but were forced to abort the operation when the FARC ground fire hit the lead UH-60. On July 27, the Bogota Junglas destroyed four coca base laboratories containing 36 kgs of cocaine base and 2.8 metric tons of precursor chemicals near Puerto Lleras, Meta. On July 30, the Santa Marta Junglas destroyed a 1,600-meter clandestine airstrip in the Magdalena department. On July 30, the Bogota Junglas destroyed a cocaine HCl laboratory in the Magdalena Medio region, finding 100 kgs of cocaine being processed at the site. On July 31, the DIRAN Chemical Group captured three metric tons of precursor chemicals at a road checkpoint in Bajo Cauca, Antioquia. On the same day, the Bogota Junglas attempted an HVT mission against the FARC 6th Front leadership, however, the airmobile assault force discovered that the FARC camp had moved days prior to the attack. Also on the same day, the Santa Marta Junglas engaged "Don Mario's" (Daniel Rendon's) remaining members when the Junglas deployed 45 men to Monteria, Cordoba for 60 days to support the CNP's Search Block ("Bloque de Busqueda"). Also on July 31, the DIRAN Cucuta Company hit an HCl laboratory near Villa de Rosario, Norte de Santander, destroying seven rustic structures, and seizing 80 kgs of coca base.

¶16. (SBU) Mark Lopes, the Senior Advisor to Senator Robert Menendez (NJ), visited the CNP Rural Training Center in Pijaos on July 2. He observed the Jungla Instructor Course, the Jungla Medical Course, met with the U.S. Army Seventh Special Forces Group trainers, and toured the recently-completed NAS-funded training center. On July 11-12 at the Santa Marta Antinarcotics Base, the Junglas celebrated their twentieth anniversary. On July 13, also in Santa Marta, NAS representatives participated in the DIRAN Interdiction Jungla Company leaders' conference. The 18-week Jungla Commando International Course began on July 27 and currently includes 40 Colombian and 55 international students. The 55 international students come from ten countries: Panama (25 students), Argentina (2), Brazil (2), Belize (2), Costa Rica (2), Jamaica (1), Paraguay (1), Peru (7), Mexico (2), and the Dominican Republic (12). The 23-week Combat Medic Course graduated 40 students in July; the next course will begin in Pijaos on August 3.

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BASE SECURITY/ROAD INTERDICTION/NVD PROGRAM  
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¶17. (SBU) The Base Security course began on July 21 in Tumaco and will graduate 44 students on September 3. The students come from various DIRAN, EMCAR (Mobile Carabinero Squadrons), COLNAV (Marine Corps) and BRACNA (Antinarcotics Brigade) units. The next course will start on September 8 in Necocli, Antioquia (critical drug transit point on the Caribbean coast, near the border with Panama).

¶18. (SBU) The Indefinite Amount/Indefinite Quantity IDIQ La Julia project to rebuild a police station as well as the Tierradentro project are slated to be completed in August, after a delay due to torrential rains. Miraflores IDIQ project's Phase II is underway. Work began at the Piedras Blancas and the Belen de Bajira projects and should be completed by the end of August.

¶19. (SBU) The Night Vision Device (NVD) program advisor returned 35 inspected NVDs to their respective EMCAR units. Manual eradication sent in 60 NVDs for inspection. The remaining 120 NVDs of the 500 purchased for the EMCAR program arrived in July and will be distributed to EMCAR units after undergoing inspection.

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MARITIME INTERDICTION  
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¶20. (SBU) The Naval Intelligence Group (GRUIN in its Spanish acronym) supported a joint COLMIL operation close to the Gulf of Uraba (Caribbean Coast, near the Panamanian border) where the reconnaissance teams located a cache filled with 1.5 metric tons of cocaine. In a nearby location, the teams also found a small camp with 260 7.62mm rounds for AK-47, one small boat, and captured five individuals. Also in the Uraba Gulf, the GRUIN seized 420 kgs of cocaine and two "go-fast" vessels that were loaded and ready to go. Two other GRUIN teams found an abandoned semi-submersible construction site. During an operation in San Andres, the Atlantic Coast Guard captured a go-fast with two crew members and seized 4.2

million dollars in cash. The Colombian Coast Guard and the CD Brigade seized a self-propelled semi-submersible near Tumaco, Narino. The Bahia Solano Coast Guard detected and seized a "go-fast" boat in the vicinity of Jurado (Pacific Coast), capturing 350 kgs of cocaine.

¶21. (SBU) The maritime advisor conducted a test and evaluation on a flotation Level III ballistic vest. The armor plate stopped all 7.62mm rounds that were shot from a machine gun at 3, 5, and 8 meters, and passed the flotation test.

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COMMUNICATIONS/WEAPONS  
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¶22. (SBU) DIRAN's radio teams supported manual eradication operations and sent radio teams to support DIRAN training on THALES MBITR (multiband radios). The weapons section donated transportation containers for explosives, tubes to clear weapons, first aid equipment, security lights, and security cameras to various DIRAN armories. The DIRAN weapons group repaired 13 M60 E3 machine guns.

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PORT SECURITY PROGRAM (PSP)  
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¶23. (SBU) The DIRAN polygraph unit conducted polygraph exams on 148 members of the DIRAN's Interdiction, Aviation and Ports and Airports units. 103 of those tested passed the exam, 43 failed, and two had inconclusive results. New DIRAN Intelligence Commander LTC Leonardo Mejia assumed the leadership of the Polygraph Unit.

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COLOMBIAN ARMY COUNTERDRUG (CD) BRIGADE  
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¶24. (SBU) The CD Brigade's Second and Third Battalions continued to support aerial eradication, interdiction, and combat operations. During July, the CD Brigade secured a total of 9,388 ha for aerial eradication missions. The battalions conducted interdiction and combat operations against the FARC's 7, 15, 29 and 30 Fronts in Caqueta, Guaviare, and Narino. The battalions located and destroyed one HCL laboratory, eight narcoterrorist camps, four coca paste laboratories, and seized 7,406 gallons of liquid precursors, 1,652 of solid precursors, 400 kgs of coca leaf, 12 microwaves, one special device used to process cocaine, and three generators. The First Battalion conducted light infantry, air assault, and combat operations training in Larandia, Caqueta. During combat operations, the battalions confiscated five hand grenades. Second BRACNA killed a FARC member during an operation. One CD Brigade soldier was killed in action.

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REESTABLISH POLICE PRESENCE PROGRAM (CARABINEROS)  
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¶25. (SBU) The carabinero squadrons are continuing their operations throughout Colombia conducting road security, manual eradication, infrastructure security and rural patrolling operations. The primary focus of the Carabineros Directorate continues to be the emerging criminal bands. In July, the squadrons operating against these groups captured 30 personnel and seized 236 weapons from them. The squadrons also captured eight FARC/ELN members and 100 common criminals, and seized 55 weapons. During counternarcotics operations, the squadrons captured 2,598 gallons of liquid precursors, 4,234 kgs of solid precursors, 1,250 liters and then 440 gallons of coca leaves in liquid. The squadrons destroyed eight base laboratories and three caches, and impounded 27 vehicles. Emerging criminal band members engaged in two firefights with the carabineros.

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AIR BRIDGE DENIAL  
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¶27. (SBU) In July, out of 2,758 air tracks over Colombia, one was declared Unknown, Assumed Suspect (UAS). Colombia did not respond



because this UAS entered the Colombian airspace very briefly during its roundtrip flight from Venezuela to the Dominican Republic and back. Near Tumaco, Narino, ABD personnel worked with the Colombian Navy and Coast Guard to impound three "go-fast" boats and arrest eight crewmembers.

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ENVIRONMENTAL  
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¶28. (SBU) In July, the interagency complaints committee received 1,020 new claims of alleged spray damage to legal crops; 949 of these cases originated from Roberto Payan, Narino. NAS and the police are investigating the legitimacy of these complaints by analyzing complaint documents, coca detection data, and spray lines. The police met with the town's mayor and loaned 10 NAS GPS devices to assist in determining the exact site coordinates. NAS will overfly the entire Roberto Payan area and capture images with the ADS camera to verify current presence of coca and judge the legitimacy of complaints. [NOTE: On August 3, an additional 1,836 complaints were received from Barbacoas, Narino; NAS will prioritize investigations there. END NOTE.]

¶29. (SBU) By the end of July, the environmental team had closed 58 crop damage cases due to incomplete applications, 20 cases because coca was either mixed with legal crops or no damage was found, and compensated 11 cases for an approximate total of \$82,840.

¶30. (SBU) The environmental team conducted an analysis of the crop damage complaint system, focusing primarily on developing an approach to decrease the backlog. As of June 30, NAS had a backlog of 791 complaints. The environmental team has developed a three-prong approach to decrease the backlog where NAS will verify complaints, pay complainants, and organize informational sessions on the complaint process for local mayors and farmers. This will allow NAS to close over 300 cases.

¶31. (U) The NAS picture museum was exhibited at the Corferias AgroExpo fair from July 16-26. Visitors received a guided tour of the exhibit and learned about all of the stages of illegal crop production; and experts discussed environmental damagers and the destruction to Colombia's flora and fauna. Various GOC entities and NGOs participated, such as the Dangerous Drugs Directorate (DNE), United for Colombia, and the DIRAN. The picture museum will return to Corferias August 13-23 for the 22nd International Book Fair.

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DRUG DEMAND PREVENTION (DDP)  
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¶32. (U) Representatives from NGOs "Surgir," "Mentor," and "Leones Educando" traveled with the program officer to the CADCA (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America) "Mid-Year Training Camp" in Louisville, Kentucky on July 27-30 and learned about DDP community coalition building. These selected NGOs will establish three DDP coalitions in Colombia in Medellin, Bogota, and in Barranquilla. Ten DIRAN officers participated in the annual DARE conference in Orlando on July 21-23; DARE International financed four of the officers.

¶33. (U) During the AgroExpo fair, "United for Colombia" representatives gave a presentation on drug demand prevention, showing the direct link between the purchase of drugs and the financing of narcoterrorism. A military officer and two civilians injured by explosive devices spoke about their experiences.

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INDIVIDUAL DEMOBILIZATION PROGRAM  
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¶34. (SBU) July was the peak month for 2009 with 265 members of illegal guerilla groups turning themselves into authorities under the Ministry of Defense's (MOD's) Demobilization Program. Major motivations for desertion are abuse by former comrades, political divergence and increasing military pressure. However, the most common reason cited continues to be a desire for a new way of life. 1,636 individuals have demobilized so far in 2009, 80 percent of whom are FARC members. While the National Liberation Army (ELN in

its Spanish acronym) represents fewer than 20 percent of the total demobilized population, compared to 2008 rates, ELN demobilization numbers have increased by 50 percent. Program budget shortfalls have been largely overcome allowing the MOD to execute contracts with commercial media outlets communicating the demobilization message across the airwaves, via television and at local promotional events. The program continues to emphasize fresh initiatives for prevention of illegal recruitment and provides psychological assistance to the demobilized. Information voluntarily provided by the demobilized is still one of the best sources of intelligence available to security forces. Reintegration remains a major challenge for the Colombian government as almost 80 percent of the demobilized individuals do not have elementary school education.

¶35. (SBU) COMMENT: The narcotraffickers are taking advantage of Colombian political difficulties with Colombia's neighbors - narcoterrorist activity is strong in border areas such as Cucuta (border with Venezuela), Gulf of Uraba (almost on the border with Panama), and Tumaco (near Ecuador). While the DIRAN Cucuta commander has developed a working relationship with his Venezuelan antinarcotics counterparts, the narcotraffickers are undeterred: the Cucuta commander noted that narcotraffickers are straddling their laboratories along the Venezuelan/Colombian border where part of the operation takes place in one country and yet another in another. Narcotraffickers are also taking advantage of their informants - when the Bogota Junglas attempted an HVT mission against the FARC 6 Front leadership, the camp had been moved days prior to the attack. END COMMENT.

BROWNFIELD